

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-19 presented in the underlying International Application No. PCT/DE2004/0011159 without prejudice, and add new claims 20-39 as shown in the listing of claims.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-19 (canceled)

Claim 20 (new): A communication system for integrating services in an environment having a plurality of spatial zones, the communications system comprising:

an IP-based communication network; and
at least one adapting and connecting device connected to the IP-based communication network and assigned to one of the plurality of spatial zones, the adapting and connecting device having an IP address, a first group of first interfaces configured to connect to non-IP-based devices, and a converting device, wherein the converting device is configured to convert a message being supplied to or being supplied by at least one of the IP-based devices into IP data in accordance with an IP protocol.

Claim 21 (new): The communications system as recited in claim 20, wherein the environment is on a ship and the spatial zones include zones of the ship.

Claim 22 (new): The communication system as recited in claim 20, further comprising a second group of second interfaces configured to connect to IP-based devices.

Claim 23 (new): The communication system as recited in claim 20, wherein at least one of the first and second interfaces includes an assigned pre-specified priority and wherein the adapting

and connecting device has a priority-controlled switching matrix for connecting the at least one of the first and second interfaces to the IP-based communication network.

Claim 24 (new): The communication system as recited in claim 20, wherein the message includes an assigned pre-specified priority and the adapting and connecting device has a priority-controlled switching matrix configured to forward the message to the IP-based communication network in accordance with the pre-specified priority.

Claim 25 (new): The communication system as recited in claim 20, wherein the adapting and connecting device includes an analog-to-digital and a digital-to-analog converter, each being assigned to one of the first interfaces.

Claim 26 (new): The communication system as recited in claim 20, wherein the adapting and connecting device has a programmable device configured to activate or deactivate at least one of the first and second interfaces.

Claim 27 (new): The communication system as recited in claim 20, wherein the adapting and connecting device is capable of being configured and maintained remotely.

Claim 28 (new): The communication system as recited in claim 20, wherein the adapting and connecting device includes a storage unit, the storage unit configured to store at least one of configuration data, messages received at the first and second interfaces, and messages received over the IP-based communications network.

Claim 29 (new): The communication system as recited in claim 20, wherein the IP-based communications network includes a management device, and wherein the adapting and connecting device has a monitoring device connected to at least one of the first and second interfaces and configured to generate and transmit at least one of a status and an error message to the management device.

Claim 30 (new): The communication system as recited in claim 20, wherein the adapting and connecting device has an encryption device configured to encrypt and decrypt messages.

Claim 31 (new): The communication system as recited in claim 20, wherein the adapting and connecting device has an internal power supply device configured to temporarily supply the IP-based devices and the non-IP-based devices connected to the first and second interfaces with electric power.

Claim 32 (new): An adapting and connecting device comprising:

a first group of first interfaces configured to connect to non-IP-based devices; and
a converting device, wherein the converting device is configured to convert a message being supplied to or being supplied by at least one of the IP-based devices into IP data in accordance with an IP protocol.

Claim 33 (new): The adapting and connecting device as recited in claim 32, further comprising a second group of second interfaces for connecting IP-based devices.

Claim 34 (new): The adapting and connecting device as recited in claim 32, wherein at least one of the first and second interfaces has an assigned pre-specified priority, and further comprising a priority-controlled switching matrix configured to connect that at least one interface to an IP-based communication network.

Claim 35 (new): The adapting and connecting device as recited in claim 32, wherein at least one message intended for at least one of the first and second interfaces has an assigned pre-specified priority, and further comprising a priority-controlled switching matrix configured to forward the at least one message to an IP-based communication network.

Claim 36 (new): The adapting and connecting device as recited in claim 32, further comprising a

programmable device configured to activate or deactivate at least one of the first and second interfaces.

Claim 37 (new): The adapting and connecting device as recited in claim 32, further comprising a monitoring device configured to generate and transmit at least one of a status and an error message to a management device.

Claim 38 (new): The adapting and connecting device as recited in claim 32, further comprising an encryption device configured to at least one of encrypt and decrypt a message.

Claim 39 (new): The adapting and connecting device as recited in claim 32, further comprising an internal power supply device.